

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCERS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic Union Christian College

and/or common Merom Institute College Hall

2. Location

street & number Corner of Third and Philip Streets N/A not for publication

city, town Merom N/A vicinity of congressional district Seventh

state Indiana code 018 county Sullivan code 153

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ

street & number 1100 West 42nd Street

city, town Indianapolis N/A vicinity of state Indiana 46208

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sullivan County Courthouse

street & number Courthouse Square

city, town Sullivan state Indiana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Union Christian College Hall is on the campus of what is now Merom Institute, located in Merom, Indiana, just east of the Wabash River near the Illinois border. It is located on the Merom Bluff, approximately 200 feet above the Wabash River, and is visible from a great distance.

The five story structure has its main entrance to the north. Additional campus structures and facilities surround the college on the south, east, and west sides.

The erection of College Hall took place from 1859 to 1863. It is a magnificent, red brick structure highlighted by chimneys and round-arched hood molds. A double-tiered cornice surrounds the building. The basic floor plan of the building is rectangular; more precisely, however, it is two intersecting rectangles, with a polygonal cupola at the intersection. The dimensions of the building are 109' x 65' and 128' to the top of the cupola.

The north and south elevations are divided into three bays, with chimneys placed at each corner of the projecting central bay. The main entrance to the building is located on the raised foundation level of this central bay on the north side. It is a recently installed central entrance with glazed double doors flanked by pairs of plate glass windows with a six-light transom. Paired, one-over-one doublehung sash windows with straight stone hoods flank the entrance. The foundation level of the two flanking bays is identical on either side of the central bay, each bay containing two pairs of one-over-one doublehung sash windows with straight hoods.

The second story of the building contains openings in alignment with those of the lower level. A modern entrance with a single door, plate glass side lights, and three-light transom is surmounted by an original stone arch with corbel stops. This entrance is surrounded by a balcony the same width as the ground floor entrance. This entrance is flanked by a pair of windows; each window has two-over-two lights, and a round arch, and pairs are joined by a single stone sill and connecting arched moldings.

The pairs of arched windows of the side bays differ in that a single arched hood unites two, two-over-two light, arched windows surmounted by a small light. The entire unit has a single stone sill.

The third story is identical to the second with the exception of three arched windows, each with two-over-two lights and connected by a single stone sill and arched moldings, which replace the entrance on the second floor.

The central bay of the fourth floor is similar to that of the third with the exception of the central windows: the three windows of the fourth floor are all the same size, where the middle window of the third floor is larger than the other two. The windows of the flanking bays of the fourth floor differ from those below in that they are miniature versions of the side windows of the central bay. They are the smallest windows of the facade.

The only windows of the fifth floor are within the central bay and are connected to those of the fourth floor by three carved stone plaques. The three-over-three light central window is flanked by one-over-two light windows. The central bay culminates in a gabled parapet.

The south elevation is identical to the main, north facade except that the windows are surmounted by brick, hood moldings rather than stone, the effect of which is a more plain appearance than that of the front. Also, the center fenestration is somewhat different, since there is no major entrance here.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1859-1863

Builder/Architect O. H. Wheelock, Chicago -- Architect
G. W. Webster, Marion, IN -- Builder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Union Christian College Hall, now known as the Merom Institute College Hall, is of historical and architectural significance. It is of historical significance because of its service to the religious and educational communities of Merom and Sullivan County. The building is of architectural significance because of its prominent location, style, and architectural details.

Founded in 1859 by a group of dedicated Christians, Union Christian College Academy provided a high school education. The college provided a bachelor's degree. For a majority of the school's existence, a master's degree was offered, as well as a theological education. Union Christian College was one of the first institutions of higher education to equally educate women as well as men.

The college occupied the present building from its completion in 1863 until rising costs forced the institution to close its doors in 1924. In 1936 the building reopened as Merom Institute, providing a place for religious camps, meetings and retreats.

Constructed of local materials, the Merom Institute College Hall is located on Merom Bluff, 200 feet above the Wabash River. This location emphasizes the size and visibility of the five story structure. Exterior details, such as the steep, gabled parapets, the elaborate cornice, and the accents provided by the chimneys and hood moldings, make this one of the most outstanding structures in southwest Indiana, and certainly the most prominent structure in the vicinity.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Buff, N. G. Historical Minutes of Union Christian College, Merom, Indiana, October, 1859
Hatten, S.E. (ed) History and Memory Sketches of U.C.C.
Bulletin issued quarterly by Union Christian College, Vol. III, No. 1, March, 1920: College Press

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	6
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4	5	1	1	4	0
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4	3	2	2	3	7	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Boundaries for the nominated property are parallel to and fifty feet from the walls of College Hall. 25

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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state		code	county		code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul A. Gettinger, Executive Director of Merom Institute

organization Merom Institute date 8-14-79

street & number P.O. Box 127 telephone 812/356-4511

city or town Merom state Indiana 47861

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *John T. Smith*

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

date 3-8-82

For HCRC use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

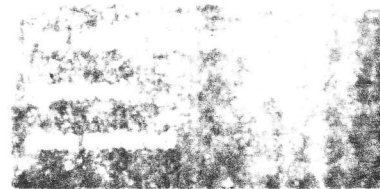
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet Union Christian College

Item number 7, Description

Page 1

The east and west elevations contain three bays including a four story, central projecting bay. The windows of the end bays are identical to those on the side bays of the main facade. In the central, projecting bay, a single, two-over-two, round-arched window appears on each of the three faces of the bay, at each level. The east and west elevations culminate in a gabled parapet, with a fifth story window like that of the main facade.

A special feature of the building is the eight chimneys at the corners of the building. The octagonal chimneys are large at the bottom and become increasingly smaller toward the top. The weathering and coursing on the chimneys form alternating bands. The chimneys of the east and west wings terminate in wide openings that probably once terminated in flues, such as the polygonal brick flues on the north and south chimneys.

Another important feature is the cornice which surrounds the building. This brick cornice, which trims the rake of the gabled parapet as well as the eaves, consists of three projecting courses and two corbel tables. The structure is covered by a roof of intersecting gables.

At the very center of the roof is a cupola placed on a platform and surrounded by a balustrade to form a balcony. The octagonal cupola is carved with incised arches, and trimmed at the top by dentils. The conical roof culminates in a point.

The first two floors of the building were renovated in 1963 to provide facilities for camps, conferences, and retreats. The top three levels remain in much the same condition as when the building was used as a college.

Highlights of the interior include two walnut stairways, original window moldings still intact, and a spiral staircase leading to the cupola.

Union Christian
Merom, Indiana
UTM Reference:
16/451140/4322370

